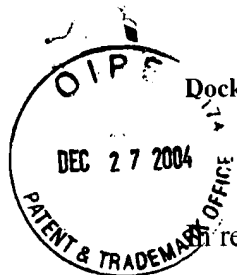


ITW / B



Docket No. 111972-125

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

re the Application of)	
Bahler et al.)	
)	
Serial No. 09/772,651)	Group Art Unit: 2121
)	
Filed: January 30, 2001)	Examiner: J. Hirl

For: **AUTOMATIC CONFIRMATION OF PERSONAL NOTIFICATIONS**

Commissioner for Patents
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RESPONSE TO EXAMINER'S REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Sir:

Applicants substantially agree with the Examiner's reasons for allowance in the Notice of Allowability, subject to the comments herein. Applicants would like to emphasize, and assume that the Examiner intended to so state, that the combination of elements in each of the allowed claims, independent and dependent, are patentably distinguishable over the prior art when each claim is interpreted as a whole.

Applicants provide no opinion with respect to interpreting the references cited by the Examiner in, for example, any Office Actions and/or any Notice of References Cited form (PTO-892), cited in this application, and therefore, do not concede to the Examiner's interpretation of same, as permitted under 37 C.F.R. Section 1.104(e), particularly since the Examiner does not respond to an Applicants' Response to Examiner's Reasons for Allowance. Applicants would like to clarify that the only interpretation that Applicants will accept or agree with is the interpretation of what one of ordinary skill in the art would understand from the prior art references.

Applicants strongly emphasize that one reviewing the prosecution history should not interpret any of the examples Applicants may have described during prosecution of this application in connection with distinguishing over the prior art as limiting to those specific features in isolation.

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Rather, Applicants again assert that it is the combination of elements recited in each of the claims, when each claim is interpreted as a whole, which is patentable. During prosecution of this application, Applicants may have emphasized certain features in the claims as clearly not present in any of the cited references. However, Applicants do not concede that other features in the claims are found in the prior art. Rather, for the sake of simplicity, Applicants, during prosecution, may have provided examples of why the allowed claims are distinguishable over any cited prior art.

Any narrowing amendments made to the claims during prosecution of this application are not to be construed as a surrender of any subject matter between the original claims and the present claims. Rather, those amendments are merely Applicants' best attempt at providing one or more definitions of what the Applicants believe to be suitable patent protection. In addition, the present claims provide the intended scope of protection that Applicants are seeking for this application. Therefore, no estoppel should be presumed, and Applicants' claims are intended to include a scope of protection under the Doctrine of Equivalents.

Respectfully submitted,

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